Hymn to the Goddess of Silence

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Hymn to the Goddess of Silence

ALL hail! O awful, sage Divinity!
Goddess of Silence! hail! eternal Pow'r,
Who knowest how the Universe was form'd,
How Nature first began! for thou wast then,
And startedst at the dread, creating Voice,
E'en then thou wast, and still thou wilt endure,
When weary'd Time, and Nature are no more;
At Desolation thou again must start,
And the vast Globe shall fright thee with its Fall.

Thee, solemn Being! venerable Queen!
Whose Charms the busy Vulgar never know,
Thee the wise Ancients justly did revere,
And Temples to thy Name devoutly raise.

Thee, Goddess! thee, at the still Noon of Night
When all is hush'd, delighted, I adore,
And the pale Moon is witness to thy Rites.

Thee, pleasing Deity! the sacred Nine,
Daughters of Jove, the blest Pierian Maids
Pursue, and find thee oft in inmost Groves;
On Rocks remote, on shady Banks they meet
Thy kindly Aid, while Phœbus ever young,
Immortal Phœbus wakes his golden Lyre;
Thy tender Ear can brook the heav'nly Sound:
Thou'rt Friend to Music, and harmonious Verse;
For tho' thou shun'st the noisy, loud Resorts
Of restless Man, resounding Palaces,
The clam'rous Camp, the dire, tumultuous Field,
And oft at the throng'd Bar art call'd in vain;
How awful yet o'er crouded Theatres
Dost thou preside, when Johnson's manly Scene,
Shakespear, or moving Otway warms the Stage?

O thou, propitious to the tuneful Quire!
Where'er thou dost reside, receive my Vows!
Whether in Deserts wild, or Woods remote,

Where yet no Path is made, nor Echoes rude
Frighten the Dryads from their lov'd Retreat;
Or whether, lonely, thou delight'st to stray
At Noontide on the solitary Plain,
While Flocks, and Herds, and all the rural Rout
Of Nymphs, and Swains are hid in cooling Shades;
Or is the Gothic Temple's gloomy Isle,
The dusky Cloister, or dark Cyprus Grove
Thy lov'd Abode? Or dost thou choose to haunt
(Hard by old Memphis, and the fabled Nile)
The empty Vaults of lofty Pyramids,
Vain Monuments of ancient Egypt's Pride?
Or, haply, farther from the World remov'd,
On Pindus' Top, or Atlas' hoary Crown,
Or some vast Promontory thou dost stand,
Whence scarce the angry Ocean is o'erheard,
To lash the hollow, far-resounding Shoar.

Where'er thou'rt found, great Pow'r, vouchsafe thy

Aid!
Deign visit our Retreat! the sacred Muse,
The sacred Muse with me your Help implores;
Of War, and Sports by turns we mean to sing,
Of mighty Heroes, and of mighty Love.
In vain the God of Numbers doth inspire,
In vain Apollo's Sons attempt to soar
Without thy Influence. Come, Goddess, come!
Bring with thee Quiet, Contemplation,
Poetic Visions bright, and Dreams sublime,
Such as of old great Homer did inspire,
Such as the Gods above themselves may dream,
Still Dreams indeed; but Dreams of mighty Jove.

Thus well attended, bless our Solitude!
There nothing shall suspend thy gentle Reign,
Save the low Murmur of a distant Stream,
Except by chance sweet Philomel complains,
Or Cloë tunes her melting Voice, and Lyre.